



NEWS RELEASE

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SoCal Gas to Pay \$4 Million for Failing to Immediately Report Aliso Canyon Gas Leak to Authorities

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey announced today a \$4 million settlement with Southern California Gas Co. that will require the utility to pay the maximum fine authorized by law and to adopt safety measures beyond those required by federal and state laws at its Aliso Canyon Natural Gas Storage Facility.

"This agreement ensures that Southern California Gas Co. is held accountable for its criminal actions for failing to immediately report the leak," District Attorney Lacey said.

"Our office has helped bring the Aliso Canyon facility into compliance, keeping in mind that public safety is of the upmost importance," she said. "Going forward the protections put in place by this agreement create a safer facility for its employees, the environment and the surrounding communities."

The company pleaded no contest to one misdemeanor count of failing to immediately report the Oct. 23, 2015, gas leak to the California Office of Emergency Services and to the local Certified Unified Program Agency. Pursuant to the plea, SoCal Gas will be ordered to pay \$307,500 which includes the maximum fine of \$75,000 plus a penalty assessment of \$232,500.

With this conviction, the company is on notice and could face a more serious criminal penalty in the future if the same unlawful conduct occurs.

As part of the agreement, the company will be required to install and maintain a new, infrared methane monitoring system at the Aliso Canyon site that will cost between \$1.2 and \$1.5 million. Real-time pressure monitors also will be placed at each gas well as required by the state. The settlement requires that an outside company be retained to test and certify that both systems are working properly.

Pursuant to the agreement, six full-time employees will be hired to operate and maintain the new leak detection systems 24 hours a day. The total cost for these positions will be approximately \$2.25 million for the next three years.

The agreement requires the company to revise and adopt new reporting policies for actual and threatened releases of hazardous materials to the appropriate agencies. It further mandates training courses on proper notification procedures for all SoCal Gas employees who work at natural gas storage facilities within Los Angeles County.

In addition to the \$307,500 fine and penalty, SoCal Gas will pay \$246,672.88 for the cost of the investigation and emergency response by the Los Angeles County Fire Department's Health and Hazardous Materials Division.

Terms of the settlement must be completed by the Nov. 29 sentencing date. At that time, the remaining three counts against the company will be dismissed. This settlement will not interfere with the pending civil actions against the company.

Deputy District Attorneys Yael Massry, Daniel Wright and Christopher Curtis in the Environmental Crimes – OSHA Section prosecuted the case.

Case 6SC00433 was investigated by the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.